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Fulbright Warns on Cuba

Reuters

Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) cautioned the U.S. government yesterday against nuclear brinkmanship in trying to prevent the Soviet Union from establishing a major submarine base in Cuba.

The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said that to assume the Soviets have no right to establish a base in Cuba is a very questionable proposition.

The Pentagon announced Friday it had evidence that the Soviet Union was building a submarine base in Cuba, and the White House said it would regard with the utmost seriousness the positioning of Soviet strategic missiles there.

Fulbright, interviewed on the television program "Issues

and Answers" (ABC, WMAL), said he did not believe the U.S. could successfully engage in brinkmanship in nuclear weapons.

Fulbright said the situation in Cuba calls for diplomacy, not bluff, and urged a redoubling of efforts to reach a strategic arms limitation agreement with the Soviet Union.

Without such an agreement, he said, "They will build bases and we will build bases until there will probably be a confrontation."

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U.S. WARNS SOVIET NOT TO BUILD BASE FOR SUBS IN CUBA

Intelligence Indicates It May
Be Constructing Facility
—'62 Warning Recalled

DATA REMAIN UNCLEAR

Efforts at Cienfuegos Being
Watched Closely, Perhaps
With U-2 Spy Planes

By ROBERT M. SMITH

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 25—The White House, recalling the Moscow-Washington understanding that ended the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, warned the Soviet Union today against building a strategic submarine base in Cuba.

The White House warning following a disclosure that the United States had intelligence data indicating that the Russians might be building facilities at Cienfuegos, on Cuba's south coast, to support the operations of their submarines.

The Administration official, who asked reporters to identify him as a White House source without using his name, said that the Government was watching developments in Cuba carefully but that it was not yet in a position to say what the Russians were building.

Kennedy Speech Recalled

"We are watching the development of Soviet naval activity and of possible construction there," the official said. "We are watching it very closely. The Soviet Union can be under no doubt that we would view the establishment of a strategic base in the Caribbean with the utmost seriousness."

The White House official then turned to a quotation on a

piece of paper he had brought with him to the briefing—a briefing that had been arranged to provide reporters with background on President Nixon's forthcoming trip to Europe.

The quotation was from a speech by President Kennedy on Nov. 2, 1962, at the conclusion of the crisis created by the Soviet attempt to introduce medium- and intermediate-range missiles into Cuba. The President said:

Policy Still the Same

"If all offensive weapons are removed from Cuba and kept out of the Hemisphere in the future, under adequate verification and safeguards, and if Cuba is not used for the export of aggressive Communist purposes, there will be peace in the Caribbean."

After reading that sentence, the official said: "The operative part, of course is 'If all offensive weapons are removed from Cuba and kept out of the Hemisphere in the future.' This, of course, remains the policy of this Government."

The official appeared to be reminding the Soviet Union of the understanding reportedly reached in 1962. In his speech, President Kennedy defined the commitments of each side:

"Chairman Khrushchev agreed to remove from Cuba all weapons systems capable of offensive use, to halt the further introduction of such weapons into Cuba, and to permit appropriate United Nations observation and supervision to insure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments. We on our part agreed that once these adequate arrangements for verification had been established we would remove our naval quarantine and give assurances against an invasion of Cuba."

The Pentagon comment on Soviet activity at Cienfuegos, which is southeast of Havana, came from Jerry W. Friedheim, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. He said that the Pentagon had indications that led it to believe that the Russians wanted to establish a permanent submarine facility in Cuba.

Mr. Friedheim stressed that the Defense Department officials were not sure of Soviet intentions and not sure the Russians

were building a submarine support base. They have noted Soviet naval activity in the area, including recent visits by ships and the towing of three barges from Havana to Cienfuegos.

Mr. Friedheim implied that some of the American intelligence came from flights over Cuba by U-2 reconnaissance aircraft.

U-2 Flights Continue

U-2 flights over Cuba have continued since the missile crisis and have been tolerated by the Cubans, apparently without incident. President Kennedy, in his speech, said the United States had "no choice but to pursue its own means of checking on military activities in Cuba" if offensive weapons were to be kept out.

At a briefing this afternoon, a second White House official reiterated that "there is no confirmation that there is a strategic base" in Cienfuegos and said there were no Soviet submarines in Cienfuegos Bay. Pentagon spokesmen said there were four Soviet ships in the port: a submarine tender, a tank-landing ship, a rescue tug and a salvage ship.

Observers here pointed out that the strategic implications of a Soviet naval facility in Cuba—even one that would service submarines carrying missiles with a 1,500-mile range—were quite different from the Soviet attempt to put missiles in Cuba in 1962.

In 1962, they say, the United States had overwhelming nuclear superiority, which the So-

viet Union was trying to redress. Now there is much greater parity, and the Russians can and do operate submarines within missile range of the United States.

A Cuban naval facility would give the Soviet Union two advantages, according to Rear Adm. Norvell Ward, commander of the Caribbean sea frontier. Reached by telephone in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Admiral Ward said that submarines "could spend more time off the East Coast if they are based in the Western Atlantic than if they were based in the Soviet Union—they wouldn't have to spend time going back and forth."

Submarines have to have a protected anchorage—"smooth water"—to make repairs and get provisions, he explained.

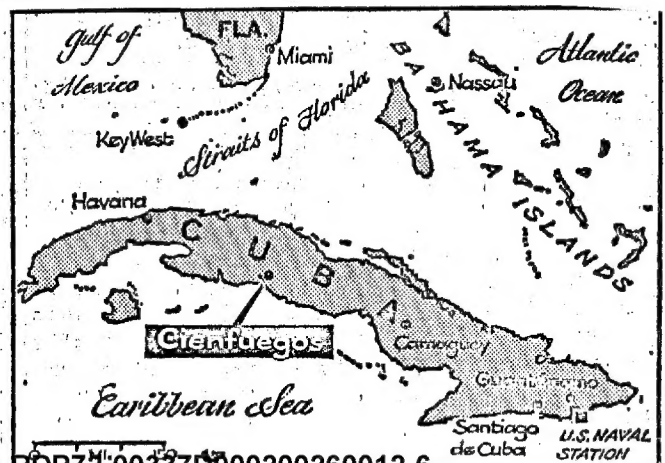
The second gain the Russians would derive, the admiral said, was "political advantage."

A naval officer at the Pentagon pointed out that the Russians had shown their flag in the Caribbean only since July of last year. "This clearly indicates their intention to operate in our waters," he said. "We can obviously look forward to seeing Russians off our coasts more and more."

Some observers speculated that Soviet naval activity in the area might pose more of a hazard to political stability in Latin America than to the United States security.

A source in the intelligence community said that what the Russians appeared to be building was a rather limited facility, not a submarine base on the scale of American bases at Holy Loch, Scotland, or Rota, Spain.

In The New York Times today, C.L. Sulzberger reported in his column that the Administration was investigating information that a Soviet naval installation was being built at Cienfuegos.



The New York Times

Sept. 26, 1970

Cienfuegos, where Soviet building activity is reported